

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for withdrawing the Final Rejection in light of Applicant's previously submitted Appeal Brief. Applicant also thanks the Examiner for the courtesy of the interviews during which both the Walker reference and the newly identified Johnson reference was discussed, and additional proposals concerning claim language modifications for underscoring the distinctions between Applicant's presently claimed invention and the prior art identified by the Examiner.

Fundamentally, Applicant notes that the prior art references of record, and particularly neither Walker nor Johnson, teach or suggest a system or method for selectively transmitting a request for proposal or RFP to only those vendors from an overall group of vendors who have been automatically verified as being qualified to perform the service or provide the specified good set forth in the RFP. As detailed in the claims, the system automatically compares vendor capability data for a plurality of characteristics with corresponding requirements in a specification. The references of record cited by the Examiner provide no teaching or suggestion whatsoever regarding this advance in the art.

Consistent with those discussions, Applicant has now modified independent claim 1 to more clearly specify both the automated nature of the system for selectively transmitting RFP information to *only* those vendors actually qualified for performing or providing the specified goods and/or services. Additionally, Applicant has also modified claim 1 to further highlight the nature of the comparisons made by the automated system for determining

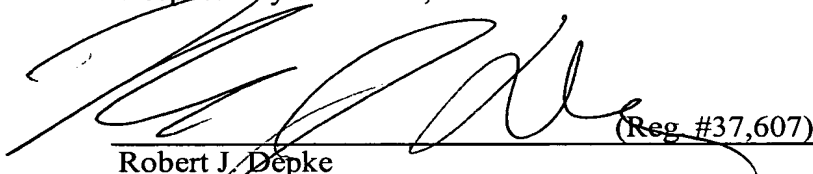
whether multiple specifications or characteristics which are set forth in an RFP or other product or service specification can be satisfied by the various members among a group of potentially qualified vendors.

Applicant respectfully submits that the claim remains in condition for allowance, particularly in light of the modifications set forth above. In light of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of the application.

The Director is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number 50-1794.

Respectfully submitted,

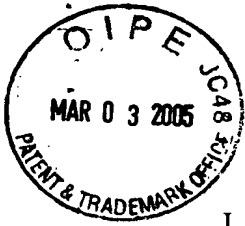
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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being delivered to the Examiner via facsimile, and also being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail on February 28, 2005 in an envelope addressed to:

**Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450**

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, written over a horizontal line.

Attorney for Applicants